

## Mr. Francis Jenk's Speech

Spoken in a Common Hall, the 24th. of June 1679.  
 for which he hath been ever since maligned  
 and scandalized by the P A P I S T S  
 and their Abettors.

Mr. Common Sergeant,



**I**T seems a vain thing for this Court to be serious about the Choice of Magistrates and Officers for the well Government of the City, except they first take care to remedy those many Mischiefs and Grievances, which the City now groans under, and which seem to threaten the ruine and destruction of the whole, that if there be not some speedy redrefs, there will be little need of Magistrates and Officers; for there will be no City or People left here to be Governed.

*London* has once already been burned to ashes, and firing is now become such a Trade, that not only *London*, the Burrough of *Southwark*, and the places adjoyning, but all the Cities, Burroughs, Towns Corporate, and places of principal Trade throughout the whole Kingdom, are perpetually in danger; so that no rational or considerate man amongst us can promise himself, his Wife, his Children, or Estate one nights security, but they may all be devoured in the consuming flames, except some speedy and effectual course be taken.

But this is not all; For were our Houses secure from fire, yet such is the general decay of Trade, as if not remedied, must unavoidably bring the whole City to poverty and ruine; and it is conceived, that this is very much occasioned by the *French*, who have laid such great Impositions upon our Woollen Cloth, Stuffs, and other Manufactures, that we have almost lost our Trade with *France*; they have spoild our Trade with *Holland*, *Flanders* and *Germany*, by a destructive War; they have ruined our Trade at home, and beggared many thousands of our honest and industrious Weavers, and other *English* Manufacturers and Traders, by the vast quantity of their Silks, and other unnecessary Commodities imported hither: so that upon an exact ballance of the Trade between us and them taken, it has been demonstrated, that this City and Kingdom doth

doth lose *Eleven hundred thousand pounds* every year. By means whereof, they who in Queen *Elizabeths* time might not be suffered to build Men of War are now grown so powerful at Sea, as to be able to beat both *Dutch* and *Spaniard*, and have made themselves in a manner sole Masters of the *Mediterranean Sea*: And they are grown so presumptuous as daily to injure and affront our *English Merchants*, and sometimes in his Majesties own *Ports*. Their *Privateers* daily take our *Merchants Ships*, plunder others, strip, imprison and torment our *Séamen* to the great discouragement of our *English Navigation*, and almost ruine of the Merchant.

I shall instance but in one thing more, but that is worse than all the rest, *That is the just apprehension that is upon the minds of good men of danger to his Majesties Person and the Protestant Religion.*

I had not spoken this at this time and place, but having the honour to serve this City in Common Council, I have endeavoured at several times to bring these things before that Court, but could not. In the end of the last Common-Council I did desire my Lord Mayor that a Common-Council might speedily be held to hear and consider of a Petition about trade, subscribed by a great number of Citizens of good quality, and his Lordship did then promise that a Common-Council should speedily be held; But it is a good time since, and there have been many Fires and Losses, but no Common-Council. Wherefore me-thinks it doth become the wisdom and gravity of this Court not to admit of any longer delay in a matter wherein their *All* is concern'd. And I do humbly move ( and I conceive it is not only my sense but the sense of the far greater part of this Court ) that some Members of this Court may accompany the Sheriffs and Mr. Common Sergeant before we proceed to any other matter, to wait upon my Lord Mayor, and the Court of Aldermen, to desire that a Common-Council might speedily be held, humbly to Petition His Majesty, That for the quieting and satisfying the minds of his liege People, and for remedy of the many mischiefs and grievances we now groan under, He would gratioufly be pleased ( according to the Statutes of 4th. and 36th. of Edvv. 3. ) immediately to call a *New Parliament*.

F I N I S.